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Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 11250 211449Z

65
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
---------- 080085
O 211237Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6280

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 11250

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, LE
SUBJ: VISIT OF FSO'S TO CHRISTIAN-CONTROLLED LEBANON

REF: (A) NICOSIA 2436, (B) STATE 206088

1. SINCE FAHMY IS IN ALEXANDRIA, I MET TODAY WITH HIS CHEF-DE-CABINET, OSAMA EL-BAZ, TO TELL HIM ABOUT HOUGHTON/MACK VISIT TO EAST BEIRUT. EXPLAINED PURPOSE AND TEMPORARY NATURE OF VISIT AND THE FACT THAT HOUGHTON/MACK WILL RETURN TO WASHINGTON IN A FEW DAYS TO REPORT. NOTED WE HAVE NOT HAD DIRECT CONTACT WITH SOME OF THE MARONITE LEADERS FOR SOME TIME AND BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO US TO PROBE THEIR CURRENT THINKING. REITERATED THAT USG OPPOSES PARTITION AND THAT PRESENT VISIT SHOULD NOT BE MISCONSTRUED AS ANY CHANGE IN THAT POSITION. I REQUESTED EL-BAZ TO GET WORD OF THIS TO THE PRESIDENT AND FAHMY IN ALEXANDRIA.

2. EL-BAZ SAID HE WOULD SEND WORD IMMEDIATELY TO FAHMY. HE QUIZZED ME RATHER CLOSELY AS TO THE ORIGINS OF THE HOUGHTON/MACK TRIP. HAD MARONITE LEADERS INVITED USG SEND REPS? TOLD HIM I WAS UNAWARE OF ANY SUCH INVITATION, BUT THAT IT WAS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT WE HAD NOTIFIED CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP THAT HOUGHTON/ MACK WOULD BE COMING SO AS TO FACILITATE ARRANGING MEETINGS. NOTING WIDE-SPREAD VIEW THAT USG IS SUPPORTING
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SYRIAN/MARONITE EFFORTS, EL-BAZ OBSERVED SOME WILL

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VIEW THIS AS SUPPORT FOR PARTITION. I TOLD HIM THAT WE ARE AWARE OF THIS POTENTIAL MISCONSTRUAL, DELIBERATELY OR OTHERWISE, BUT WANT GOE AND OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS TO KNOW THAT THIS IS NOT THE CASE. EL-BAZ THAN ASKED IF WE HAD CONSULTED WITH SARG BEFORE SENDING MISSION? TOLD HIM I WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY SUCH CONSULTATION, BUT THAT SARG (ALONG WITH JORDANIAN AND SAUDI GOVERNMENTS) IS BEING INFORMED OF VISIT TODAY IN THE SAME TERMS THAT I HAD PASSED ON TO HIM.

3. BY THE END OF OUR TALK, EL-BAZ SEEMED SATISFIED.
EILTS

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